

Honorable Julius Genachowski, Chairman; Commissioner Michael J. Copps;  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn; Commissioner Robert M. McDowell;  
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker

Federal Communications Commission  
445 Twelfth Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Received & Inspected

MAY 26 2010

FCC Mail Room

Re: CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners Copps, McDowell, Clyburn, and Baker,

I am deaf and I use the Video Relay Service using my native American Sign Language (ASL). It is important for you to know that for those of us who are deaf, VRS has become an integral part of our lives in order to be functionally equivalent to those who are hearing. It helps us to be independent and to connect with hearing people such as our doctors, mechanics, bosses, workplace, family, friends, colleagues, and everyone that we need to communicate to exercise our independence.

I must admit my dismay when I read the Public Notice from FCC on VRS rates. The immense change in rates will surely put VRS companies in a position which they will have to cut back on quality and quantity of services or put them out of business. It will not be anywhere near what we receive today and what we have today is still far from us being functionally equivalent. It seems to be unreasonable and not well thought out.

You must be forward thinking and ensure that we continue to have access to VRS and allow for research and development to continue in order for us to have access to newest and the best technology that can be offered to us. Additionally, the ADA law indicates that all deaf individuals must have access to communication and be functionally equivalent.

Half of the deaf and hard of hearing population still do not have access to broadband nor many are able to afford broadband. The FCC are not doing enough to ensure that broadband can be more affordable for all of us.

It is difficult for us all to sit back and do nothing while we see technology develop and grow all around us and we are unable to benefit from the same kind of technology that our hearing counterparts have access to. This is totally unfair and the burden is up to you to ensure that VRS remains to be the best that they can be in meeting the needs of deaf and hard of hearing people who use ASL.

I urge you to put yourselves in our shoes and think about the impact this would be should communication access for you suddenly becomes minimal. You would not stand for this, not for one minute.

Sincerely,

Signature

Mary Christensen

Date

5-19-2010

Name

MARY CHRISTENSEN

Address

3535 N. VERMILION APT. 111

City

DANVILLE

State

IL

ZIP

61832

Email

none

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Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners Copps, McDowell, Clyburn, and Baker,

I am a deaf person who uses Video Relay Service over broadband to communicate in American Sign Language, my primary language. For those of us who are deaf, VRS is a life-altering broadband service that is a vital link to the hearing community.

Ensuring that deaf individuals have access to VRS and encouraging improvements in VRS should be a high priority for you as Chairman and Commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires the FCC to make available to all deaf individuals nationwide "functionally equivalent" communications.

You will soon determine the future of VRS. When you set the VRS rate, you will determine whether America makes progress toward the statutory goals of functional equivalence, nationwide access, and inclusion – or force deaf users to revert to TTY communications. And, you will determine whether VRS fulfills its potential to drive broadband adoption by the deaf, even in the face of disproportionate poverty, disenfranchisement, and isolation.

I was deeply disturbed to see the Commission's recent Public Notice on VRS rates. These proposals will push VRS providers into bankruptcy and mean an end to VRS.

You should be increasing the availability and use of VRS, not cutting back. You should adopt a rate that encourages continuing improvements in VRS technology. Recent developments in VRS are a good example of how the service can be improved, such as enhanced 911 services, 10-digit numbering, a larger and better-trained pool of interpreters, and better videophones with an array of enhanced features. Monthly payments for broadband are a big expense for many deaf people, and instead of trying to cut back on VRS, you should be exploring ways to make VRS over broadband more affordable to deaf individuals.

Progress toward functional equivalence will be destroyed if the FCC does not encourage VRS providers to improve VRS and make it more widely available. VRS is a recent and dramatic advancement that benefits those who are deaf, but so much more can be done. It would be tragic if the FCC were to destroy this broadband service that is so vital to the deaf.

I urge you to establish a fair and predictable rate for VRS that will encourage VRS providers to invest in improving VRS and reaching more deaf individuals. The law requires it and it is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

Signature Carmen Montanez Rodriguez Date 5/19/2010

Name Carmen Montanez Rodriguez Deaf

Address 15 Marginal St 2FL

City Brooklyn State NY ZIP 11207-2016

Email MtMA MAC ID 100A554F810

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I urge you to establish a fair and predictable rate for VRS that will encourage VRS providers to invest in improving VRS and reaching more deaf individuals. The law requires it and it is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

Signature

*James Gurley*

Date

*5-10-10*

Name

Address

City

Email



Mr. James Gurley  
5102 Green Meadow Rd  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

State

ZIP

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Sincerely,

Signature

*Janet Turner*

Date

*5/21/10*

Name

*Janet Turner, CSM - WV DHHR*

Address

*150 Maplewood Ave.*

City

*Lewisburg*

State

*WV*

ZIP

*24901*

Email

*Janet.B.Turner@wv.gov*

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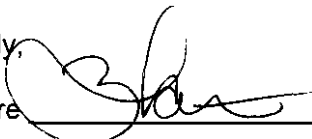
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Sincerely,

Signature



Date

5-21-10

Name

Marty Watkins

Address

HC 62 Box 17

City

FRANKFORD

State

WV

ZIP

24938

Email

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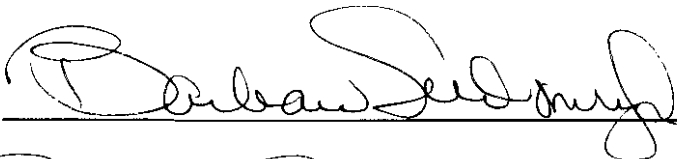
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Sincerely,

Signature



Date

5/21/10

Name

BARBARA Seidman

Address

2906 Vago Rd

City

Frankford

State

WV

ZIP

24938

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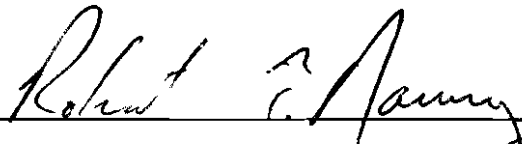
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Sincerely,

Signature



Date 5-21-10

Name

Robert T. Nannery

Address

531 N. Jefferson St

City

Lewisburg

State

WV

ZIP

24901

Email

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Sincerely,

Signature Kathleen M. Beckett Date 5-21-10

Name Kathleen M. Beckett

Address RR2 Box 172 F

City Lewisburg State WV ZIP 24901

Email dandkbeckett@verizon.net



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Sincerely,

Signature Rob F. Followell, CEO Date 5/21/10

Name Greenbrier Valley Medical Center

Address 202 Maple Wood Dr

City Randolph State WV ZIP 24970

Email Rob-Followell@CHS.net

The attached document is part of a mass mailing. The number of identical documents as specified in the File Number/City, St. field have been received by the Commission on this same date. You may view the documents at the FCC Reference Information Center, at 445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW, Washington, DC, Room CY-A257.